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time since near Cashel. If these, as I think likely, formed part of a similar apparatus, they would indicate the manufacture of spirits on a much larger scale. I do not think that any of these pipes that I saw were bent; and I doubt whether the hard solder would have permitted any bending. They may have been differently arranged, as, for instance, by having the extremities of straight pipes inserted into two bars of wood hollowed at intervals, so as to form a continuous passage for the vapour and condensed fluid.

In conclusion, I have merely to notice the different kinds of brass and bronze vessels found in Irish bogs, which may have been used as stills. They vary in size, from half-a-gallon to 100 gallons. The larger ones seem to be comparatively modern, being made of pot brass, and one specimen actually bears the date A.D. 1640. But the smaller ones are made of the ancient bronze, and may really be of great antiquity.

It is unfortunate for an argument in favour of the antiquity of distilling apparatus in Ireland that the material of which our only specimens of the serpentum is composed, the use of solder, and the condition of the metal itself as regards oxidation, do not permit us to infer a date for their construction earlier than the 14th century. This would, therefore, correspond with the view taken by the writer of the article on *Aqua-Vitæ*.

E. C.

BRUCE AT CONNOR.

CONNOR, from its antiquity and ecclesiastical character—but still more from its association with the name of Edward Bruce—is, perhaps, one of the most interesting spots in the County of Antrim. Our present inquiry refers only to the last topic—being to ascertain how far the tradition of the neighbourhood has preserved the memory of that disastrous event in our annals—the invasion of Ireland in 1315, by Edward Bruce. With this portion of our history Connor is so far identified as having been the very battle-field of one of the greatest contests during that turbulent period. A recent inquiry on the spot enabled us to ascertain that local tradition is still perfectly clear and strong on the subject; and, as it is always interesting to compare such oral testimony with written history, we have thought it worth while to note down as much as we could learn from the people of the neighbourhood, in order to preserve it in a permanent form before all memory of the event has disappeared. Our readers will judge for themselves how far the details given by local tradition

correspond with historical narratives. If it be borne in mind that the statements now recorded were made by persons who were entirely unacquainted with any written chronicle of the period, the value of their testimony is considerably enhanced.*

According to the unadorned tradition of the people, then, Edward Bruce, with the view of making himself King of Ireland, landed on a certain day—a very long time ago—with a Scottish army, on the coast of Antrim, and marching southward, was encountered and defeated by the English forces in a battle fought at Mount-hill. Soon after having experienced this check, the Scots entered the country of the Mac Quillans, for the purpose of chastising the chieftain of that clan, for having aided the King of England in his attempt to conquer Scotland. On arriving at the range of hills near Glenarm, terminated by the steep mountain-pass, now called the “Path,” which leads into the “Glens” from the level lands of Cairn-castle, they were met by the Mac Quillans, and a great battle ensued, in which, after much loss on both sides, the Scots were victorious. This tradition is corroborated by other evidence. In digging a drain, some years ago, on a farm called Solar, which lies near the spot described, vast quantities of bones, both of human beings and of horses, were thrown up, together with pieces of buckles and other undescribed fragments. Our informant stated to us that the bones appeared to be in pits, and that cart-loads of them might have been collected.

Tradition next relates that after this battle the Scottish forces passed through the mountainous district near Slemish, with the intention of attacking the city of Connor; and that their way thitherward may still be traced by two large cairns, erected either at the time or afterwards, to commemorate their destructive progress. One of these is called Carnave, in a townland of the same name; and the other, some miles further South, is Carnalbanagh, which gives name in like manner to another townland. It was on the site of this last that tradition says another battle was fought with the Mac Quillans, when the Scots were again successful. The cairn last named was unquestionably erected to commemorate some event of importance; for its magnitude, when viewed by the traveller on the mountain-road which passes below it, is quite extraordinary. This was the case, at least, some twenty years ago; and even now, although great encroachments have been made on it for road-making and other purposes, it is a very remarkable object.

The next place in which the Scots make their appearance, according to our local tradition, is a part of the country about a mile north of Connor. Here they were obliged to remain for several months to recruit their strength after the losses they had sustained in the previous engagements; and also to await reinforcements from Scotland, before assaulting the city of Connor, garrisoned by the English. These reinforcements having arrived, the Scots, under the command of a personage called the *Red Reiver*, prepared for the attack. Local tradition is here very precise in pointing

* In this inquiry the writer was much assisted by a gentleman whose family has been long settled in the district, and who is well acquainted with all matters of local interest.

out the places where particular events occurred during its progress. It is said that, while one portion of the Scottish army approached Connor from the north side, Edward Bruce, with another portion, marched secretly to a deep defile, about a mile to the east, at the head of a long valley through which the Connor-burn flows. The result of this manœuvre will soon appear. The assault was directed by the "Red Reiver;" and, after some fighting, the Scots apparently gave way, and succeeded in drawing their opponents from the city in pursuit. Retreating over some high ground and an open valley, they at length made a stand on the face of a considerable hill, in the townland of Tannybrake, where a severe engagement (we may suppose the real battle) ensued. In this the Scots were victorious, but with the loss of their commander, the "Red Reiver," an individual whose name is quite familiar to the people, and who seems to be considered by them as next in importance to Bruce himself. The spot where this noted warrior fell is still pointed out. Evidences of the battle of Tannybrake or Connor are also afforded by the names which still distinguish several places near the site. One is the *Houghan*; so called, said our informant, from the blood of the slain having formed "houghs" or pools. Another is the *Pow-hill*; and a third the *Grave-yard*, apparently so named from its rich black soil, and from numbers of bones being sometimes turned up in it; but where no church or consecrated burying-ground ever existed. As a further evidence, both of the battle, and of the presumed importance of the city of Connor itself, it is stated that a person who resided on the battle-field of Tannybrake, found there a key of extraordinary size, and brought it to a blacksmith (an ancestor of our informant) to have it broken up and applied to some use. On submitting it to the anvil, however, it fell asunder in scales; and according to the opinion of some persons at the time, it was the key of one of the city gates, carried to the battle by the warder, who had probably fallen in the contest. This explanation, we fear, savours somewhat of the marvellous. Returning, however, to Edward Bruce, whom we left in ambuscade with a part of his forces: tradition goes on to state that when he found the town evacuated and the battle going on at Tannybrake, he attacked and easily obtained possession of the place, which he plundered. A hill, adjoining the defile where his men lay concealed, affords a view of the country to the north of Connor, and of the ground over which the Scots made their feigned retreat. Here he is said to have stood; and from this circumstance, the hill was formerly called "Bruce's Hill," and even still is so named, though now more generally known as "Ingram's Hill," from a blacksmith of that name, who lived on it in recent times.

Such are the fragments of tradition still preserved by the people of Connor respecting Bruce. Nothing further seems to be known concerning the subsequent progress of the invaders; and although we have collected a variety of other details connected with Connor itself, we prefer confining ourselves at present to the subject of Bruce.

To make a brief commentary on the foregoing narrative, we would in the first place remark that no historian, so far as we are aware, has described Bruce as marching at once directly on

Connor, or as taking the route indicated by the legend. In this case, therefore, tradition, which has been said to overlie truth—to mingle and confuse the colours of the true historic picture—has not belied its usual character. It is natural, too, that in the minds of those who had heard such tales from their forefathers, the importance of Connor should be magnified beyond its just proportions. They were, of course, not acquainted with the motives which actuated Bruce and the other great actors in their daring enterprise; nor aware that the Scottish adventurers had remained three entire years in Ireland, fighting, with more or less success, from one extremity of the kingdom to the other; and that it was some time after their arrival that the battle of Connor took place. The tradition, on the contrary, points out Connor as the first object of attack, and its possession or destruction (as we might suppose) to have been one of the great aims of the invasion. It is historically true, indeed, that Bruce's first battle was fought at Mount-hill, though the tradition erroneously represents him as vanquished on the occasion. But the object of the invaders was not the possession of Connor, but of Carrickfergus, a far more important acquisition. There were, no doubt, many other engagements in the County of Antrim during the three desolating years when Bruce occupied the country; and some of these may very possibly have taken place at Solar, Carnalbanagh, and elsewhere, of which no record remains but the mouldering bones of the combatants, or the solitary cairn which marks the field of blood. Nevertheless, the battle of Connor and the events connected with it are not to be classed with those which are supported merely by vague tradition. Such an opinion is forbidden by the well-known allusion to Connor by Barbour; by a consideration of the importance of obtaining possession of the place, situated as the opposing parties were at the time; and by the actual presence on the spot of King Edward Bruce (if we may so style him) on the one side, and that of some of the most distinguished Anglo-Irish on the other.

An able and valuable series of articles has appeared in this *Journal* entitled "The Bruces in Ireland," compiled from the annalists, and from the poetical narrative of Barbour: this we adopt as our authority for the historic facts, and from it, we think, may be inferred the reason that Connor occupied so prominent a place, and was the scene of so important a contest. Bruce had penetrated into Meath before he came to Connor at all—at least there is no account of his having been there more than once in person, whatever his followers may have been; and, therefore, his remarkable and only visit took place after he had been in a distant part of Ireland, and it may, probably, be explained in this manner. Pressed by famine in Antrim, which had obliged him to prey even on his allies, the Irish septa, (and probably among these the MacQuillans of this county, as tradition seems to indicate, and which is singularly corroborated by Barbour,) Bruce's army had passed southwards into West-Meath; where, again being beset by his enemies, he was driven northwards in a starving condition. His opponent, the Earl of Ulster, had previously established at Connor a magazine of provisions for his army; and this becoming known to Bruce, made the capture of the place a matter of great consequence to him. The traditionary account of

the subsequent battle, making due allowance for the vagueness attending such a source of information, coincides in its general features with the written account handed down by chroniclers of the time, as may be seen in the article already referred to, *The Bruces in Ireland*. There does, in fact, seem to have been an ambushade by the Scots; the capture of an escort of provisions by stratagem; a feigned desertion of their camp, leaving their banners flying, in order to entice their opponents from their stronghold; and finally, a triumphant entry of Bruce into Connor, which he plundered, carrying off to Carrickfergus "corn, flour, wax, and wine." But who was the "Red Reiver," the leader represented by the tradition as having fallen on the Scottish side? Our readers may probably recollect the romantic episode in the life of William Wallace, when, forced by adverse fortune to fly for a season from his enemies, he met and vanquished at sea a renowned Norman pirate, called, from the colour of his ship's sails, by this very name, the *Red Reiver*. Wallace is said to have found in the ship a nephew of the conquered pirate, who subsequently attached himself to the fortunes of the great Scottish chief, and, accompanying him to Scotland, became an eminent general in Bruce's army, retaining the name by which his relation had been distinguished. This was, no doubt, the individual who, according to the Connor legend, fell at Tannybrake. There is no allusion, however, in Barbour or elsewhere, as far as we can ascertain, either to the name or the event. It is difficult to reconcile the loss of a renowned leader with the statement that on the Scottish side, after the battle, all was rejoicing. We are told that the Earl of Ulster fled to Connaught; that part of the spoils taken on this occasion were sent to Scotland; and that King Robert Bruce was forthwith urged to come over to Ireland to join his brother, which he soon after did.

Stripped of all exaggeration, we may presume that Connor in those days, from its local position, and from possessing extensive ecclesiastical buildings, as well as, perhaps, some houses of greater size than was usual at the period, may have been selected as a suitable site for a magazine of provisions by the Anglo-Irish. Though Barbour calls it "that cyté;" though an earlier legend mentions—

"MacNisse, with thousands,
From the great *Condere*;"

and though a rhyme, still current in the neighbourhood, declares that

"Twelve miles from the Curran,^b and eight from the Bann,
There does the great citie of Condere stan'";

our impression would certainly be, after a recent visit to the place, that a "city" in the ordinary meaning of the term, it never could have been. Local tradition, however, is quite opposed to this conclusion; and a very large extent of ground, comprising both the present villages of Kells and Connor, as well as a considerable space around them, is pointed out as the site of the city by those who uphold its ancient grandeur. But there are no external evidences now visible to support this opinion; there are no remains of buildings or stone walls, although we might expect to find such, if they had ever existed, even after the lapse of more than five centuries. The only fragment of the pre-

^b The peninsula called the *Curran*, at Larne.

sumed city which was pointed out to us, is an inconsiderable fort or raised work, usually described as the place where formerly stood the Castle of Connor, the citadel of the place. From other evidence, however, this is more likely to have been the site of the bishop's house or castle. There is now no vestige of the building but the elevation on which it stood, which is ten or twelve feet above the level of the adjoining ground, and encompassed by a stone wall of ancient appearance, a part of it recently repaired. Around it there was formerly a deep fosse, now filled up. The original shape of the outwork seems to have been very irregular. Within memory, an old building stood on this spot, which was occupied as the Session-house and School-house of the Presbyterian congregation of Connor. Here, likewise (though it may be presumed, in a mansion of more pretension) resided, in the 17th century, Dr. Colville, a name better remembered in this part of the County of Antrim than even that of Edward Bruce. In earlier times, no doubt, this place which now forms part of a pleasure-ground, inclosed within the precincts of the peaceful glebe, was the scene where Irish, Anglo-Irish, and Scottish chivalry may have met in deadly conflict, and where events worthy of record may have taken place, could they but be recovered from the oblivion of the past.

G. B.

THE ULSTER STATE PAPERS.

BY HERBERT FRANCIS HORE.

HAVING frequently taken occasion to draw attention to the abundance and interest of the Irish Correspondence and State Documents in the Record Office of the Secretary of State, I am glad to be able to announce that the manuscript Calendar of these valuable materials for Irish history is in course of publication by Government. Dr. O'Donovan has expressed, in a recent page of this *Journal*, his well-informed opinion as to the merits of that Calendar, which has occupied its compiler, Mr. Hans C. Hamilton, for many years, and I can reiterate in the strongest manner his warm terms of approbation.

The Calendar about to be published is, in fact, a vast digest of some hundred volumes of MSS., which extend from the year 1509 to the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign. Apart from the difficulty of deciphering a large portion of this immense bulk of ancient manuscripts—a mere technical difficulty, and completely overcome by Mr. Hamilton—was the labour of reading over the entire mass,